

The bill, which reauthorizes the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) for five years, preserves coverage for more than seven million American children, including more than a quarter of a million children in Ohio, and extends coverage to an additional 4.1 million children.

According to Families USA, the measure would extend coverage to 119,000 children in Ohio, where currently 214,000 children remain uninsured. That translated to a reduction in the number of uninsured children in Ohio by 56 percent, according to the non-profit advocacy group.

"During these difficult times, we must ensure that children of working families receive the quality, affordable health care they need," said Congresswoman Kaptur. "With more than 400,000 Ohioans out of work due to the poor economy, the danger is that children will fall through the cracks and fail to receive basic health care.

"This bill means 11 million children in America will have regular doctor visits and preventive health care such as immunizations. It means they are more likely to receive health care in doctors' offices as opposed to emergency rooms. It is fiscally responsible legislation and common sense public policy."

Funding for the program will be derived from a 61-cent increase in the federal tax on a pack of cigarettes, bringing the total tax to \$1 per pack.

The CHIP program provides health care coverage for children whose live in families with incomes that are too high in most states to qualify for Medicaid, but in many cases too low to afford private coverage.